

“Fragile - Sheltered and Stifled”

My work is an exploration of the fragility of the psyche through the use of materials, showing the disunion of the external with the internal through the use of textural materials of various strengths and idiosyncratic uses; a box, if you will, with our own experiences, memories and thoughts as the padding that buffers and holds the inner self.

The dichotomy between the solid frames of the boxes and their tenuous, fragile and often precious contents, bound, bruised and barely held in by the very materials that are supposed to protect and enclose.

The metal boxes have become analogous to a cage - our thin skins - trapping us in a weakened and broken state. Where, once, they were perhaps solid, vital and sure, they have been worn down and away to mere frames, reminisce of a skeleton now rather than a vessel; a ghost of what their function used to be.

Some have built up delicate walls to try to protect what is within, translucent and tattered and barely holding up to the weathering.

Some are empty, beautiful decoys, while others are filled with barbs of self loathing, and hard metallic linings of guilt that we confuse with protection and internal strength while the sharp edges scratch and wear away our thin skin.

Others have completely broken down, crushed under foot or under their own weight, exposing and destroying the contents within so that our convoluted and precarious inner balance comes tumbling down around us, to leave our core exposed and raw.

Yet even with the fragile broken nature of the vessel, these boxes, are still the face we present to the world and it is beautiful, in it's own way. It means there is still something there, holding together through all the battering, wanting to exist regardless of how weathered the vessel has become.

I have chosen to use mixed materials that represent fragility, or perceived strength such as metals and thick glass, juxtaposed with delicate and fragile materials that would not be otherwise found in conjunction with, let alone buffered or protected by, such hardened and sharp surfaces.

Through my exploration of my concept, I experimented with egg shells and their intrinsic fragility, looking for ways to emphasise their delicacy and as an analogy for the thin skin we try to protect and the fragile inner self.

Porcelain was used as it is delicate and difficult to work but deceptively strong once fired.

Thin, translucent hand made papers, and reflective surfaces were used to indicate the methods we use to hide ourselves and our frailties from others and our reluctance to see past our own self imposed barriers.

Small delicate items - each meaningful in their metaphorical nature; a hollow 3D printed crystal skeleton, a slender orchid and a fragile eggshell with a temporary 'cure' inside - are used as self representations; damaged to the point of poignant vulnerability but still beautiful and worthy of redemption and safe keeping.